

imbedded in the plates of the test, and have in some measure injured the surface.

We dedicate this species to M. Michelin of Paris, the distinguished author of the 'Iconographie Zoophytologique,' as a tribute of gratitude for the valuable collection of Echinoderms he liberally and generously sent us from his unrivalled cabinet, to facilitate our studies of these beautiful forms of ancient life.

*Nucleolites scutatus*, Lamarck.

Since the publication of our memoir on the CASSIDULIDÆ of the Oolites\*, we have received from Professor Deslongchamps and M. Tesson a series of type specimens of *Nucleolites scutatus* from the Coral Rag of Trouville, Calvados, which we have compared with *Nucleolites dimidiatus*, Phillips, described in that memoir; from this comparison it is certain, that our Wiltshire and the Yorkshire Nucleolite, figured by Professor Phillips as *N. dimidiatus*, is the true *N. scutatus* of Lamarck. This circumstance affords another example of the great importance of comparing all our British Oolitic fossils with those collected from the Jurassic strata of the continent of Europe, before assigning them a position in our catalogues of species.

[To be continued.]

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTICES.

*Botanical Letters to a Friend.* By Dr. F. UNGER. Translated by Dr. PAUL. London: Highley, 1853.

THE philosophical botanist, he who regards the vegetable creation as one great group of the collective representatives of the fruit of life, who gathers up plants from far and near, to trace the laws of morphology through the kaleidoscopic multiformity of shapes, to follow the mystery of organization through its progressive stages, or to sift the complex ingredients of the history of the diffusion of vegetation over our globe,—he to whom the word Botany expresses the existence of such fields of inquiry as these, is often exposed to an ordeal such as his brethren labouring in physical science now happily recall as among the traditions of the past. That is to say, while the astronomer, the physicist, and the chemist appear to the outer world armed with mysterious powers, before which the soothsayers and magicians of former ages would 'pale their ineffectual fires,' the botanist, running abreast of his science in these days, is a being altogether removed from the cognizance of the many; and dreads to hear an allusion to his pursuits, in general society, well knowing that it will be the text to a disquisition on the "beautiful wild flowers that grow in such and such a place," a recommendation to visit such

\* Annals of Natural History, vol. ix.

and such a spot, for the sake of the curious 'mosses,' found about the rocks, and more such innocent, unconscious irony, conveying to him the impression that he is regarded as an individual, inoffensive perhaps, but somewhat monomaniacally devoted to a pursuit which has no end or aim beyond the collecting and classifying of weeds, and whom it is advisable to the artistic horticulturist to keep out of his garden as a ruthless destroyer, or an encourager of obstructive, unattractive 'curiosities.' Were education what it ought to be,—did Greek roots and the root of evil, with their accompaniments, absorb no more than their appropriate share of the time of our youth, the naturalist would perhaps have a fairer appreciation. For with the majority of mankind, it is only in youth that the mind is freely opened to the reception of new fields of knowledge, and seeing that even the small Latin and less Greek are mostly lost in the bustle of active life, it can hardly be expected that new modes of thought and observation, new sciences, will be readily taken up by the occupied adult; yet, if the young mind had been familiarized with the objects and methods of natural history, many and many a man, now a mere sportsman, a grower of prize turnips, or a hunter up of old first editions or rare copies, might have found delight and advanced human knowledge, in devoting his leisure to the promotion of some branch of inquiry, in which his intellect would have had a fair chance of being kept in healthy exercise and trained to the annihilation of prejudice.

These reflections have been awakened by the sight of the book before us, a translation of a little work written by one of the most distinguished among German botanists of the new school, for the purpose of popularizing the leading ideas of the science. The letters are intended for educated readers, and perhaps may be found to presuppose a larger infusion of scientific knowledge than is generally possessed here; but the conscientious reader, who will take the trouble to read them as carefully as he would a leader in 'The Times' on the subject of free trade or the law of settlement, will not find much more difficulty in understanding them, and will gain acquaintance with laws which have a rather more striking and permanent influence on the world's history.

The translation is fairly done,—perhaps is a little too much tinged with German idiom. As a small matter, but one partaking of the crying sin of modern literature, we must deprecate most strongly the introduction of new words and barbaric compounds, and in this view cannot forgive the expression plant-cell, plant-acid, &c. The wood-cut illustrations are very elegant.

*Synopsis des Caloptérygines.* Par M. E. DE SELYS-LONGCHAMPS.  
Brussels, 1853.

Every one who has wandered on a summer's day on the banks of any of our rivers, must have noticed a dragon-fly of considerable size, whose beautiful metallic tints, dark wings and graceful motions render it one of the most elegant denizens of such localities. This